



**Mayor Sam Liccardo**  
**State of the City Address**  
**March 14, 2015**

***Embargoed until delivered***

Thanks Dad. My father turns 80 years old tomorrow, so I thought it'd be fun if we asked him to introduce me today. Nobody believes he's 80, of course, because I'm getting gray hair faster than he is.

We decided to present this "State of the City" event on a Saturday morning in order to open this event to families for the first time. Since we're here with my family, I want to thank them for their love and support-- beginning with my incredible wife, Jessica and my parents, Sal and Laura, and our family members who are here, who are too numerous to mention, because Jessica and I come from big families – our parents were both very busy, and very Catholic. My mom can't be here today, unfortunately, because of a health setback, but we're keeping her continued recovery in our prayers.. I'd also like to send a special abrazo to a dear member of our family, Padre, who is watching us today on TV, as he courageously battles cancer.

A sincere thanks as well to the administration and teachers of Independence High School for hosting this morning's event. Go Sixers! Of course, thanks to our fired-up City Year corps members, who inspire our East Side students every day with their great work. Thanks to our many volunteers here today, including teams from Our City Forest, our Youth Advisory Council, Overfelt High ROTC, and Independence Interact, and to Jim Reber and Michelle McGurk for coordinating today's program.

Finally, thanks to each one of you for taking time out of your Saturday morning to talk about the future of our city.

**The Future**

I chose Independence High School for this morning's event for two reasons. First, I want to talk about the future. It is here, at Independence, that we see our city's future most palpably. Independence's students will become our Valley's next leaders, employers, and innovators. Their trajectory will dictate the destiny of our city.

The second reason we're here is this: in San Jose, as throughout our globe, the sun rises in the East. The East Side has long displayed the great promise of San Jose's future. Generations of San Jose families have grown here. California's first municipal park was created here, in Alum Rock.

It was here, in our East foothills, that Lick Observatory astronomers employed the world's largest refracting telescope to explore the universe's vast expanse, captivating the imagination of millions with each discovery. It was in Evergreen, over a century ago, that professor John J. Montgomery, flew his pioneering plane that would be among the very first to launch humans into flight. And a half century ago, at a demonstration at a Safeway only a few blocks away from here, an East Side activist named Cesar Chavez would plant the seeds of a movement that would soon transform the conscience of a nation.

It is here, on the East Side, that generations of new immigrants have shaped our demographic landscape. This Spring, we commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the arrival of Vietnamese refugees in our neighborhoods, the pioneers of what would become an extraordinarily vibrant, successful community that has made San Jose the proud home of more persons of Vietnamese descent than any city outside of Vietnam.

Yet along with San Jose's promise, the East Side also displays our peril. For decades, the East Side has sought greater safety, and for a more equitable share of the Valley's growing prosperity. Increasingly, we hear these appeals – for safer neighborhoods and for broader opportunity—from every corner of our city. It is the time and place, then, to renew San Jose's great promise to generations of families, here in the East Side, and citywide. A safer and more prosperous San Jose will herald our city's great renewal.

### **A Safer City**

First, we'll renew San Jose by making our city safer.

Of course, our police officers remain stretched perilously thin. Despite the department's shrinking size, we've seen our hardworking officers actually reduce crime in the past two years. For example, after a spike in burglaries shook Evergreen six months ago, we've seen burglaries plummet due to hardworking Foothill Division patrol officers under Captain Mike Knox. Felony property and violent crime rates are now lower than when I was first elected as a councilmember in 2006, and according to the FBI, San Jose has the lowest rate of violent crime of any major city in the United States. Thank you to each of our officers for your extraordinary work, every day.

Last week's violence, however, serves as a painful reminder that we still have much to do. My Council colleagues and I have committed to restore police staffing by adding hundreds of officers in the next half-decade, with better compensation to boost hiring and retention. There's only one path to get there, however: negotiation.

The mayoral election has passed. Just as the retrospective glance of Lot's spouse transformed her into a pillar of salt, a focus on our past only calcifies our thinking, and hardens our hearts.

This moment compels us to look to our future. We won't always agree, but if people agreed on everything, we wouldn't need to negotiate. We've been at the table, ready to negotiate, for two months. To all of our employee unions: we welcome you to join us. Only by working together will we find a way to settle our differences, and to move our city forward.

In the meantime, there's much more we can do to be smarter about crime in San Jose. We don't have to wait—we are making San Jose safer by employing innovation today:

- In other cities, security camera registries have effectively enabled hundreds of arrests annually. Last month, we rolled out a registry in San Jose, allowing residents and store owners to voluntarily sign up if they own a security camera, at [www.sjpd.org](http://www.sjpd.org). If you own a security camera, please sign up. When a burglary or robbery takes place nearby, our officers can save hours by calling you to request to view video of a license plate or suspect.
- In the last year, Police Chief Larry Esquivel launched a program to employ what we call “community service officers” – academy-trained civilians who can improve our Department’s response to burglaries, auto thefts, and other crimes. This year, we’ll expand that successful program, hiring 28 more community service officers, to take reports, collect evidence, lift fingerprints, and enable our sworn police officers to focus on their most critical work.
- We also know that better lighting deters crime. We’re replacing 18,000 yellow sodium streetlights on the South and East sides of town, making for brighter, safer neighborhoods, while saving money by installing energy-efficient LED lighting. This year, we’ll expand that retrofit citywide, leveraging innovative approaches, like “smart pole” technology, that will enable us to install LED’s at no public cost, while improving mobile service coverage.
- Better use of data can also help us combat spikes in neighborhood crime. This year, we’re deploying analytics software that will help us improve deployment of patrol officers to anticipate crime hot spots.
- Data also helps us better learn about prevention. In the last 8 months, for example, officers made 108 arrests for daytime burglaries in our Southern Division, but over half of those arrestees were juveniles. So, we’ll combat burglaries by doubling down on a proven strategy: reducing high school truancy -- tracking students who cut class, and holding them and their parents accountable.
- Finally, we’ll help our teens build resumes rather than rap sheets. Father Greg Boyle, the founder of Homeboy Industries, put it best: “nothing stops a bullet like a job.” So, we’re starting with jobs. We’ll invest \$1 million through our Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force for summer jobs for at-risk teens in high-crime neighborhoods, matching the County’s commitment. Leveraging the support of companies like Microsoft, Target, and Lowe’s, we can give hundreds of teens their first paycheck. Please join our public working group, led by Building Trades CEO Josue Garcia and Chamber of Commerce CEO Matt Mahood, on April 1.

### **Broadening Prosperity**

By providing a path to employment for youth in gang-impacted neighborhoods, we can make San Jose safer by being smarter. This brings us to the second dimension of San Jose’s renewal: broadening our Valley’s prosperity for many struggling families here in the East Side, and throughout our city.

## **Learning**

Renewing San Jose's promise of economic opportunity begins with our children, and their education. Sixty-two percent of San Jose's high school students—and a higher percentage of our Latino students--do not graduate meeting the admission requirements for a state university. They face a future of financial struggles.

Yet our achievement gap, as Silicon Valley Community Foundation CEO Dr. Emmett Carson reminds us, is itself a product of an opportunity gap. Too many students lack the resources needed to achieve.

But we are San Jose. We will give every child the chance they deserve by leveraging our libraries, leadership, linkages, and learning:

- First, our libraries: Over 80% of our voters approved an extension of a library parcel tax, because our community knows that our libraries provide a safe learning environment for thousands of children, even while open only 4 days a week. This year, we're going to open our libraries 6 days a week. Adding two days of service will open the door to learning and opportunity for another 7,000 kids, and each one of those kids deserves it!
- Then there's "leadership." Three years ago, Carl Guardino, the CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group and I launched "1000 Hearts for 1000 Minds," with a simple premise: if we engage more of the Valley's brilliant workforce in tutoring struggling students, we can move the needle on student achievement. We've already seen over 500 students benefit from the initiative, through proven programs like Reading Partners. We're now re-launching the effort to push for 1,000—come join us!
- Linkages—working together with the East Side High School district, this summer we'll connect East Side students with free wi-fi, bridging the digital divide for thousands of low-income families.
- Finally, extended learning programs— whether after-school or summertime—can profoundly boost the prospects for struggling students. Our city-funded homework centers largely vanished in the Great Recession. Working with our schools, foundations, and non-profits, we're launching a more sustainable partnership to expand innovative after-school programs in our neediest neighborhoods, starting this Fall. Please join our next public working group for "San Jose Learns" on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

## **Homeless**

While there are many worthwhile investments to make in our children and their futures, we also have urgent needs today. No one feels the impact of the Valley's prosperity gap more acutely than the thousands of our homeless living in creeks, parks, and streets.

Several years ago, our City joined with the County, the Housing Authority, and the Health Trust to form “Destination: Home,” to better leverage our scarce resources to tackle homelessness. Using a “housing first” model, this partnership housed 839 of the most chronically homeless individuals in two years, saving millions of public expenditures on the traditional band-aids for homelessness, from emergency rooms to jails.

This year, we’ll re-commit to “housing first,” by pledging \$3.5 million in this year’s budget for encampment response and rapid-rehousing of our homeless. We’ll launch more innovative approaches, such as creating RV parking lots, converting motels, and building microhousing, often leveraging private sector philanthropy. We’ll work with our neighboring cities to broaden impact fees on developers to expand affordable housing resources countywide.

And we’ll expand our “San Jose Gateways” pilot program, to engage local companies to sponsor key entrances to our City: homeless men and women will clean and beautify the streetscape under the management of the San Jose Streets Team, in exchange for housing, vouchers, and job training. Special thanks to those employers—Ernst & Young, Pinger, SunPower, TiVO, Wells Fargo, and Xilinx—for committing early to enable a few of our sisters and brothers to supplant the dangers of the street with the dignity of a studio apartment. We are San Jose, and we’ll show the world that when innovation meets compassion, we can lift an entire city.

### **Manufacturing and Jobs**

Of course, our Valley’s opportunity gap has widened as middle-class job opportunities have vanished. Manufacturing provides one way to restore high-paying opportunities for thousands of our residents lacking a college degree. Jo Vanderbeek reminded us of this a few weeks ago, when she opened her company’s new plant in North San Jose, employing 500 workers at Vander-Bend Manufacturing. Thank you to Jo VanderBeek-- and to all of San Jose’s job- creators -- for employing San Jose residents in high-quality jobs.

As manufacturing continues “reshoring,” we can do more to grab San Jose’s share. We’ve reached out to manufacturers, brokers, and industry experts, to fashion an initiative to enable tech manufacturers to overcome the challenges they experience in finding sites, space, and skills to grow here. We can also preserve thousands of blue-collar jobs by protecting industrial land from conversion by housing developers.

Although Forbes ranked San Jose as the happiest place in the nation to work, we can do more to make San Jose a happier place for employers. We’ll leverage technology to reduce delays in permit approvals for small businesses, and will ensure that our immigrant entrepreneurs have access to permitting assistance in multiple languages.

### **BART**

Broadening access to job opportunities also depends on better transportation. This year, our VTA will complete the Bay Area’s first bus rapid-transit system, connecting East Side and Downtown, and expand it westward thereafter. BART will arrive three blocks from here in 2017, on-time and

under budget. We've got to keep to going, though, and we've got to fill a funding gap to keep building it. Working with our regional partners at MTC and the VTA, we're going to finish the job. Today, I commit that I will do everything in my power to find the dollars needed to build every single one of San Jose's four BART stations—including East Side. We rise and fall together as one city, from Downtown to Berryessa to Alum Rock, because we are all San Jose!

### **Power of Partnerships**

All of this, of course, requires collaboration. Our hard-working employees at City Hall have endured layoffs, pay cuts, and pension reform. They perform professionally because of their passion for public service. We owe them our gratitude.

With a third fewer employees than a decade ago, we have increasingly embraced the imperative of collaboration. We need partners to achieve our common goals. All around us today, we see the power of those partnerships:

- The Silicon Valley Leadership Group successfully advocated to secure Hainan Airlines' direct flight to San Jose from China, generating hundreds of new jobs.
- Faith leaders and community-based non-profits team up through the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force to reduce gang recruitment.
- As over 30 new technology companies moved into Downtown in the last year, a US Patent and Trademark Office has just begun construction, thanks to the formidable teamwork of Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, former Mayor Chuck Reed, and Carl Guardino.
- The Rotary Club just cut the ribbon on an extraordinary play garden at the Guadalupe River Park, the region's largest fully accessible park for children with physical limitations.
- Next week, the San Jose Earthquakes will celebrate opening day in a world-class stadium, creating a great civic gathering place for our diverse, soccer-loving community.

Last month, we formed the City's first-ever office of strategic partnerships, to enable us to better leverage new opportunities from the private sector, foundations, and non-profits. We need partnerships, because fiscal challenges will continue to confront our City.

But there's a more important reason for collaboration: because our legacy to our children—this great city-- is a collective legacy. Each one of us plays a role. Civic renewal is not a spectator sport – if we are to succeed, everyone has to participate.

Martin Luther King, Jr. famously urged us all to aspire to greatness, through service: “Everyone can be great,” he declared, “because anybody can serve.” Through service, we can achieve a great collective legacy: to renew our city. To remake a San Jose that is safer, a city that offers broader opportunity, where all feel a part; a city that nurtures our children, and enables them to fulfill their parents' loftiest aspirations.

Each of you has received a form as you walked into the gym today, and if you don't have one, just wave, and one of volunteers can provide you with one. On that form, you'll see opportunities to get involved. Tell us how you'd like to leave your legacy in San Jose--by tutoring a student for an hour a week through "1,000 Hearts for 1,000 Minds," by volunteering for a neighborhood cleanup, or by finding a summer job for a teenager with your company. Find your passion, sign up, and serve.

Everyone of us can participate in this great collective legacy: renewing our city.

"Everyone of us can be great," Dr. King urged, "because anybody can serve."

Together, we are servants. Together, we will renew our city. Together, we are San Jose!